DEWAN-PRESIDENT : *Fellow Members of the Assembly,*

Anticipating your sanction and in view of the motions for adjournment, of which notice has been given to me, which more or less directly deal with the same problem as I am proposing to deal with in my remarks to this Assembly, I shall now place before you, as it is my duty and my privilege to do, the main features of the situation in respect of various matters that have developed between the periods when the Legislature last met and the present day. In so doing, I am afraid it is necessary for me to transcend the ordinary time-limit, but I trust I shall be forgiven for doing so, having regard to the importance and urgency of some of the problems and to the widespread and legitimate interest taken by the people of the State in the matters which it will be my duty to develop before you.

At the outset, and before dealing with any other subject, it is my duty to reiterate what has already been said so well and so felicitously by those who organised a public meeting sometime ago in this capital City of Trivandrum—I am referring in this connection to the great resounding success of the armies of the Allies by reason of which Africa has been rendered free from the influence and activities of the Axis Powers. In a telegram addressed by me to the Resident for the Madras States in order to be read at that meeting—the telegram which incidentally took five days to reach Trivandrum from Ootacamund—I made it clear that I regarded the recent events, which have cleared Africa of the invader, as a turning point in the history of humanity. The reason why I made that observation was not only because this particular victory has followed a series of reverses due to the unpreparedness of the Allies in the past, but mainly because it is the starting point or rather the point of departure in regard to the future. The beginning of this conflict may be traced to the theory of the super-man and the *Herren Volk* or the superior race entitled to dominate the world. In other words, there underlay the assumption of racial superiority, the theory of the white race as against the yellow or the black races. This assumption of racial superiority will, I take it, come to an end with what has been achieved by the might of the Indian troops as well as the resounding prowess of the other Allies. (*Cheers*). It is no longer possible for one race or one creed or one colour or one section to arrogate to itself special prerogatives and special privileges, and from that point of view I regard this as a turning point in the history of humanity. I regard it as a turning point also from another point of view and that is this—that a new conception of world order is emerging into existence recognising local autonomy in local concerns and based on the inter-dependence of the world in most fundamental activities. These are also bound to come to an end with this great event.

Coming nearer home I trust that these two lessons, which I say will be learned by humanity as a result of the great success of the British, the United States and other Allied arms, will furnish a guidance to us also. Today neither England, United States, Russia,

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China nor Asia can be said to be independent in the old sense. The old basis of nationalism no longer will and can be accepted to be correct. It would be necessary in the future to regulate by some central world organisation many things which are now regarded as the proud privileges of the individual nations. It is impossible hereafter to contemplate travel by air or the organisation of basic industries as being regulated by England, America, Canada, Russia, India or any other single nation. The dangers of allowing unrestricted air travel and the dangers of allowing unrestricted armament production in individual countries have been so much impressed upon the people of the world that tomorrow or day after tomorrow—sooner it comes, the better—an organisation will have to be set up composed of the main nations and races of the world, intent upon policing the world, detecting and preventing plotting subterranean mischief and advancing those common economies and other such ends which are but for the benefit of humanity. This great victory in which the Allies have closed one chapter, and, I trust have opened another, will therefore be of special significance in the history of the world. I am glad that this State has in its own way and to the extent possible of its resources, contributed in men,—in armed forces and in labour corps—in material, in money, in equipment and in ships to the common cause. I am very glad that this State was not behind-hand in its manifestations of rejoicing, of relief and of expectant hope for the future which was adumbrated, envisaged and given expression to at the meeting to which I have referred earlier in my speech.

I next turn to a matter of equally world-wide concern and that is the great statesmanlike pronouncement of Premier Stalin of the U. S. S. R. for the purpose of dissolving what is called the Comintern. As in the case of Pakistan and other 'stans', this Comintern was intended originally to be an outside organisation directing the people in various States and countries in order to bring about a world revolution. For that purpose they adopted certain symbols, a red flag, a sickle and a hammer and certain methods of propaganda which were deeply resented by nations which were not in entire sympathy with the communistic propaganda. I do not mean to say that Russia has not made a signal, unique and an incomparable contribution to human thought by that communistic philosophy of hers. They have fundamentally altered the conception regarding capital and labour. They have brought into the forefront the importance of the labouring and sweating inhabitants of the world. They have also made it possible for the State to realise itself as a trustee of the people at large, so that it may be said that wealthy men hold their wealth in trust for the country. It is no longer their private and personal wealth beyond a certain minimum. Socialisation and communalisation of wealth is one of the most fruitful ideas initiated by socialism. But the methods that they pursued in bringing about that programme did not always find acceptance in other countries. It was therefore with a world-wide relief and satisfaction that the people of the world listened to the following message of Premier Stalin.

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[President.]

He said that there were four reasons for the dissolution of the Comintern. The first is that there should be no fear in any country of the possible intervention of the U. S. S. R. directly or indirectly to carry out Bolshevik policies. Just as we in Travancore resented the influence exerted by the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League or any other organisation in order to deflect the policy of the Travancore Government, likewise, it was felt in great countries that it was an attempt on the part of the U. S. S. R. to interfere with the local politics in pursuance of their particular aim, and that policy has been given up. The second point that he urged was that there should be no apprehension in any part of the world that communist parties take orders from outside agencies. I need not say more on that point. The third point is that there is an imperative necessity all over the world to unite for common purposes of war and peace regardless of parties. That appeal I have often made and I reiterate it in the words of Premier Stalin. There is need for reconciliation between capital and labour, between landlord and tenant and between Government and the people. There is no longer the possibility of Engel's theory or Karl Marx's theory of a landless Proletariat always and inevitably fighting the capitalist and the land-lord classes. This class-war, I trust, will be a thing of the past. The fourth was that there should be a single international camp by conviction and joint work. Now that has been followed by the British Labour Party's resolution of the 28th May 1943 declining affiliation of the communist party of Great Britain and advising the party to dissolve itself following the example of the Comintern. For reasons which I shall presently place before this House, I am going to make an appeal to the Communist party—not the All-India Communist party—but the Communist party of Travancore to dissolve itself forthwith and join the other parties, especially the rank of organised labour. So long as the Communist party acts as a part of the general labour movement in the State, it will be allowed the fullest scope for all its activities realising that the members of the Communist party are pledged to give all possible help during this war. When the leaders of the Communist party in Madras and here interviewed me, I said that they would be given full scope for useful activities in connection with the war, in connection with the distribution of food and so forth. But in so far as the Communist party in Travancore flies its own red flag and owes allegiance to bodies whose centre of activities is outside the State, they will not be allowed to function. I shall presently place before you some of their activities. I am glad to say that the All-India Communist Party in a resolution passed last evening, which came over the wire today, have also endorsed the policy of Premier Stalin and cancelled the Comintern as a separate party.

Now let me consider what the Communist party of Travancore has done. I had made arrangements for searching their office and I have got certain documents. I shall place on the Secretary's table for the scrutiny of the members of this House the manuscript instructions issued to the members of the communist party. These are manuscript

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instructions sent round to the members of the party and they are to the following effect. Communist classes have been held at Alleppey, Kottayam, Changanacherry, Quilon and Balaramapuram, where the party literature, specially prepared for the purpose, was read, volunteers were organised and trained in what they called 'guerilla warfare', squad drill, etc. Mischievous leaflets and pamphlets blaming the Government for all the present difficulties of the people were largely distributed. Now let us see the line of action they take. There is a paper called 'Desabhimani'. That is the communist organ which is being published from Calicut. That is the main vehicle for the promulgation of the communist doctrines. We have proscribed that journal. The communist class at Alleppey was raided on the 25th May 1943 and several items of communist literature including five manuscript note-books containing secret instructions for the party organisation were seized. From these it will be seen that the party is engineering a mass revolution while professing to aid the prosecution of the war. I am quoting from a rough translation, the original of which any member of the Legislature is at liberty to see. "We need not say people's war; criticising imperialism, speak about our own freedom; our object in doing so is to attract those under bourgeois leadership to our rank; when it is said that we should protect our country, we mean that Japan's avarice for a Burmese Empire and Britain's Imperialism should be destroyed for establishing our own freedom; do not use the expression 'help the war'—instead say, National Defence; in a free world, a free India should be established by her national leaders." Writing about bomb explosion and sabotage, it is said that these things should not be viewed from the standpoint of the moderates—that is, the people should not be condemned for these, for "if we say so, it would amount to ridiculing the people and alienating their sympathy and helping repression; the blame for these must be put on the fifth columnists."

There are a number of communist documents here. All those documents have been seized and a gentleman called Karunakaran, who is arrested and detained in jail, is the person who was holding the classes. I do not want to stigmatise all communists. Government have got a list of those communists who have been circulating these documents. Their idea is that they should help the "people's war" and not the present British imperialistic war. That has been their programme. So far as that is the programme, this Government will invoke its powers, whatever the policy may be elsewhere, and see that the people who preach those doctrines are not at liberty. Let there be no hesitation or doubt in the matter. We are passing through difficult times. Our food supply is a difficult problem. It is usual to arouse discontent especially where there is the idea to arousing that discontent. I may say this, that no flag will be allowed to be hoisted in this State except the State Flag and the Union Jack. Any organisation that flies its own flag independently will be asked to hoist down the flag. I have given instructions to the police to pull down those flags. Let me repeat

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[President.]

that, so that there might be no misunderstanding about the position of the Travancore Government in this matter. The Travancore Government have absolutely no quarrel with communism in the sense in which it has been expounded by Premier Stalin and interpreted by the British Labour Party. But this Government so far as it has means of ascertaining that people are masquerading under the title of communists or under the title of friends of those who are fighting this war, for the purpose of the co-ordination of their own activities in relation to such matters, those men will be treated as enemies of society.

Now I come to a matter which has undoubtedly aroused considerable interest and has been the cause of great distress to the people in this State. On a previous occasion it was my privilege to speak to this House and to the sister House on the food problem. I then bore witness to the solicitude of His Excellency the Viceroy and the help that has been rendered to us by many persons including Major General Wood, the present Secretary to the Supply Department. It is not my purpose to repeat my observations excepting that it is my elementary duty on my behalf and on behalf of this Assembly and the State to thank the persons who have realised our need and who have come to our rescue. When I say rescue, I am using the word in a qualified sense. It is true that today practically all the rice and millets that we can reasonably ask for have been promised to us. But the performance has not been equal to the promise. I mean it in no disparaging sense. On account of transport difficulties by sea and by land, the rice and millets promised to us had not in any substantial measure reached us and we are getting it in certain quantities. Moreover it has become essential to collect all the surplus paddy and rice within the State as a reserve and as a possible stand-by in case of deficiencies and difficulties elsewhere. I see that considerable feeling has been aroused as to the methods of implementing the proposals of the Government. What Government have decided to do is to ask this House to elect—the official members will not take part in the election— four members and the other House to elect two members to an Advisory Committee which may function until the crisis is over. To that Committee all these aspects will be brought home and their advice will be taken to the extent possible so that it might be said that popular opinion, the opinion of the people, in regard to the matter might impinge itself, not after a programme has been concluded, but during the time it is being implemented. That is the proposal which I wish to place before the House. But as a preliminary to other observations which I propose to make, let it be said—and I say it from the bottom of my heart—that it is difficult for me to think of any other entity in India that would have taken the situation in such a meek and philosophical spirit as the people of Travancore have done. It is my duty as an administrator to pay my tribute and homage to all the people of Travancore who, though half-starved and badly hit by the war had, thanks to their loyalty and devotion to their Ruler, refrained from those violent crudities and manifestations which have disgraced other parts of the country where the food problem was acute.

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Having said that, it is my duty, and my very pleasant duty to say that, with certain exceptions—lamentable and regrettable exceptions—which have been taken serious notice of—the people who have been entrusted with the work of collection of paddy and rice, distribution of paddy and rice, rationing of paddy and rice, have done marvellously fine work. A person here or a person there may say that it is merely giving a certificate to the people who serve under him. Those who have seen what is happening elsewhere—I have been recently to Ootacamund, I have been in Madras, in Delhi and in Bombay—and I trust that people who have recently returned from conferences and gatherings elsewhere will be able to endorse my opinion—that the case is no better anywhere than here but that, if at all, there is much more bitterness in every part of the country than here. Finally, I may say, that, in the course of a month at the most, the crisis would have passed away, but it is only a crisis that is passing away. For the next two or three years until and unless Burma and Indo-China are reconquered, that crisis can never be fully met.

Travancore requires on an average more than 30,000 tons of rice every month to meet the local deficit. From July 1942 when the first of the monthly quotas of imports was allotted by the Madras Government till the end of April 1943, the quantity required to be imported to meet the local deficit in full was therefore more than 3,00,000 tons of rice. According to the quota sanctioned during these ten months from the various Provinces, the State got only about 88,000 tons. The balance, viz. 2,12,000 tons, represents the deficit which has been spread over the whole State during the last ten months; and the food control measures of the Government were intended to alleviate the distress at least partially.

I may say that for reasons into which I shall not enter, the Madras Government some months ago decided to cancel their previous determination to help us with their rice. They came to the conclusion that the figures were inaccurate, that there was no surplus and that Madras was a deficit province, and the Government of India have decided that it is a deficit province. Thus it became the duty of this Government to point out that the rubber estates could not work, that the tea estates could not work, that the industries would come to a stand-still unless the Central Government came to our rescue.

The increasing intensity of the all-India food problem and the difficulties resulting from the absence of co-ordination between the efforts of the various Provincial Governments in the matter, led to the formation of a separate Food Department by the Government of India towards the beginning of 1943. In the second Food Conference which followed in February 1943, the distress prevailing in Cochin and Travancore, perhaps unequalled in any other part of India, and our normal demands were fully explained, and that explanation was made in Delhi most effectively and most eloquently by our representative, the Dewan of Cochin, our sister State. He met His Excellency the Viceroy and officers of the Government of India to

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[President.]

bring home to them the seriousness of the food situation and strongly impressed upon them the imperative necessity of immediately allotting the quotas to the two States in accordance with the target figures furnished. I may add that, in regard to rice or any other matter, the Government of Travancore and the Government of Cochin have been acting with the utmost co-operation and as one unit and that is a matter of profound satisfaction. As a result, the programme of All-India purchases and supplies for the next twelve months as now envisaged by the Government of India, includes supplies to Travancore and Cochin of 2,50,000 tons of rice and 2,10,000 tons of millets substantially covering their normal declared deficit, though to the extent of about 45 per cent., this deficit in respect of rice will be covered by millets such as Bajra and Jowar. The State gets in addition about 10,000 tons of wheat. We are likely to get some more wheat as a result of our representation, because it has been placed before the Government of India that as between *kambu* and wheat, our people would probably prefer wheat.

Bajra is an entirely novel diet to the ordinary Travancorean. Quite recently when I was in Ootacamund, I was given bread to eat which was not made with more than 30 to 40 per cent. of wheat. Either Bajra or Maize was mixed with it. The taste was not the same, the feeling was not the same, it looked like a slump of half-baked flour. In Bombay the case is not different. The bread that is supplied there and the *Atta* that is supplied there are mixed with various grains which nobody can distinguish. The high nutritive value of this millet, especially in vitamins and minerals particularly of calcium and phosphorus, has already been made known to the public and the mixed diet made possible by the supply of adequate quantities of Bajra will, I hope, be adopted and be to our lasting benefit. No portion of the quota allotted to us has yet arrived and our representation made for quick despatch is being responded to and arrangements are being made for the transport of 5,000 tons from Tanjore area for Cochin and Travancore. This is likely to give us some immediate relief.

Along with these endeavours for the procurement of food supplies from outside the State, an intensive effort has been made to increase food production in the State. As a result of the "Grow More Food Campaign" and favoured by the demands of the starch industry, the cultivation of tapioca has had a phenomenal progress and it is estimated that the area under tapioca cultivation has increased by about 25 to 30 per cent. during the last one year. Opening of about 20 manure depots by the Agricultural Department, prohibition of export of bones, oil cakes, fish manure, etc., from the State, manufacture of compost manure throughout the State should all contribute to a substantial increase in our agricultural production. Manufacture of fertilizers is being taken up on a factory scale and the State is giving every encouragement to such ventures. Here I may mention that it is the definite policy of this Government to increase agricultural production by every means possible except registering large areas in favour of particular individuals. The increase in the agricultural production has been

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sought both extensively and intensively—extensively by opening fresh tracts of forests and swampy places, and intensively by helping in the starting of fertilizer industries. This Government will not spare any amount of money, nor will it fail to use all influence it possesses to start production of fertilizers in the State. Steps are being taken for the purpose. 600 acres of single crop lands in North Travancore have been brought under double crop through lift irrigation by means of electric power from the Pallivasal Hydro-Electric Project. Through the efforts of the Agricultural Department, about 200 acres of fields in South Travancore have been brought under cultivation of pulses. About 8,000 acres of land from the Forest Reserve have been made available for cultivation and it is expected that about 6½ lakhs of *Paras* of paddy and 2,500 tons of tapioca can be realised from these fresh cultivations. It is estimated that the Punja Cultivation Scheme in 7,000 acres of lands usually allowed to lie fallow in Kuttanad has yielded about 5 lakhs of *Paras* of paddy, notwithstanding the loss through untimely floods in two-thirds of the area.

The purchase of local paddy under a Special Officer has been progressing satisfactorily. The Purchasing Officers have been instructed —and this is a matter which is not often borne in mind – that in cases where the yield is below the normal or less than what is required for sale to Government under the quota fixed, exemptions may be allowed on the merits of each case. Many persons have come up to me with petitions saying that the exemptions have been wrongly interpreted, that deserving cases have been harshly treated and that a man who has a production of 1,100 *Paras* has been asked to deliver 600 *Paras* and so forth. Some of these complaints may be true. I shall always welcome either the Advisory Committee which is being constituted or other responsible people bringing to the notice of Government, actual cases. But I have also known cases where persons, and persons of very high position, and persons belonging to the Houses of the Legislature having taken up a line of action which is not conducive to the harmonious working of those rules. I do not wish to mention any name, but I am leaving the matter there. The more influential the persons are, the more wealthy they are, the bigger the capitalists are, the less consideration will be given to them by the officers and if any officer does not think of the claims of the poor starving man who is waiting for his next meal but thinks only of the claims of the wealthier people, such officer will not be in service for long. This Government has not hesitated when there was even a legitimate suspicion to suspend people who have been guilty, like Mr. Ramachandra Aiyar, Inspector of Police; who has brought shame and humiliation on that Department, and to take prompt steps against such members of the Revenue Department who have misused this occasion to acquire property for themselves and who are using their position as Proverthicars or as Tahsildars or as higher officers to get more money and more paddy by being monopolistic. They will be proceeded against on the slightest reasonable suspicion and absolutely no mercy or consideration will be shown to them, because to show them mercy or consideration would be an act of cruelty to six millions of people.

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[President.]

The purchase of local paddy under Special Officers has been progressing satisfactorily. It is expected that within about a month from now the entire purchases on the acreage system will have been completed. The surplus stock of paddy possessed by the big landholders has also begun to be purchased and it is hoped that with the stock obtained, it will be possible to meet a portion of the normal demands of distribution in the State.

Under the basic plan for the procurement and distribution of food grains by the Government of India, Travancore and Cochin expect to obtain over 80,000 tons of rice during the coming three months and the Government of India have undertaken to use all their priorities, so far as Railway transport is concerned. The main difficulty in this connection is the inadequacy of transport facilities. It often happens that consignments purchased and ear-marked for the State have to remain indefinitely in the purchasing centre itself due to want of transport facilities. Our difficulties have been more accentuated and have been enhanced by other circumstances. Talking as a very uninstructed man and subject to correction by those more competent authorities who deal with such matters, one would have thought that it was part of common sense to send surplus stocks, say, from Orissa to Madras and from Madras to us. Geography would seem to demand this course. Railway and steamer facilities would seem to legitimatise such ardent expectations. But evidently high policy takes a different line. We got a letter three or four weeks ago that 750 tons of rice have been ear-marked for the States of Travancore and Cochin in Kashmir and can be taken delivery of in order to relieve the distress of Neyyattinkara or Kottarakara or some other place. The basic feature of that situation is that the nearest motor bus terminus to Kashmir is 200 miles. That is, the rice generally comes by the Jhelum by rafts which travel at five miles a day, and that comes 200 miles and there is a bus service running from that place to India. Similarly we must purchase rice from Baluchistan. Baluchistan is not a place with motor road traffic. It has necessarily to take a most circuitous route before rice can reach Travancore or Cochin. That is the way in which Sind rice travels, and similarly from the Central Provinces. Thus the rice we are getting has to come from Kashmir, from Sind, from Orissa or the Central Provinces and from the Eastern States. That is the exact position. Therefore when honourable members deal with this problem, they must realise the inescapable factors of the situation that we cannot stretch our hand to Madras and take the rice. The hope that Madras will satisfy our needs has to be given up. We should get it directly from far more distant parts. These are our difficulties and I trust honourable members will face that problem in all its bearings and see exactly why we have had to postpone the effective dealing with the situation. As I have already said, it often happens that consignments purchased and ear-marked for the State have to remain indefinitely in

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the purchasing centre due to want of transport facilities. These facilities are expected to be accentuated in the case of the 80,000 tons referred to above. But let us remember that the major portion of supply has to rely on transport by railway. Daily arrival at the rate of about 7,500 bags requires one special train every day and a corresponding number of inland conveyances. It requires therefore 150 special trains of forty wagons each to transport this quantity by rail. Special arrangements are being made to handle traffic both on the railways and within the State. I may mention in this connection that I must publicly own my indebtedness to Sir Edward Benthal, my old and valued friend and Member in charge of Transport, for having given without any grudging, complete priority to the movement by railway of food grains and special priority in respect of Travancore and Cochin. We are greatly indebted to him for that and trust that his efforts will be crowned with success.

One of the important points stressed by Government during the recent visit of the Regional Commissioner is the fixation of reception points in Travancore. Mr. Karunakara Menon who visited this part of the country is a gentleman who is acquainted with our habits of food and internal economy. He knows what the average man here thinks of *Bajra* as a substitute for rice and I am very glad indeed that a person who knows and can appreciate local conditions is now vested with the wide powers enjoyed by a Regional Commissioner. Movements of stocks either by railway or by steamer will concentrate the entire deliveries at Cochin, transport from where to the various distribution centres in the State will be beyond the capacity of the available means of inland water communication to handle. Government have therefore made representation that fifty per cent. of the stock moving into the State may come by Metre Gauge to Quilon and Trivandrum. It is evident therefore that in respect of the arrangements for transport and the promptness of purchases by the Central Government, there is bound to be some delay and our schemes have consequently to be based on the contingency of such delays. The necessity for careful conservation of the existing stocks both of imported rice and locally purchased paddy and for intensifying the local production is, therefore, all the more urgent.

On the basis of the stock available and anticipated either through local purchase or through imports from outside during the next three months, a revised scheme of distribution by ration cards has been introduced in all the Municipalities in the State. As it happens, tremendous enthusiasm was manifested in the first few weeks or months or probably hours, and after the lapse of those weeks, the enthusiasm and the business capacity of the local bodies have not been maintained, I am afraid, on the same level. There are undoubtedly complaints with regard to the management of the Municipalities, but, after all, local self-governing institutions have to be vested with all these powers, which are of paramount importance especially in a matter of this kind. If ever the Municipalities find themselves unable to discharge the business satisfactorily, an alternative arrangement will be made.

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[President.]

Now, orders have been given to increase the ration on the basis that in the course of a few weeks, large supplies will be forthcoming. It is the intention of the Government gradually to extend the rationing scheme throughout the country.

The locally purchased paddy has begun to be distributed along with the imported rice in all the taluks in the State, and in order to cover the cost of collection, expenditure on account of storage etc., the selling price has been fixed at Bh. Rs. 1-7-0 per Standard *Para* ex-Government Granary for the time being. The policy of Government in the matter of fixation of price is that while no profit is expected from the transaction, it should not result in loss to any extent.

I shall now explain this a little more fully. Honourable members might have noticed that Cochin has raised the price to Re. 1 as. 7. The question of price is a very difficult one. It will be seen that it is not the object of the Government to deprive the land owner who has for many years been battling with the problem of low prices. At the same time it must be borne in mind that we cannot pay the land owner anything corresponding to the prices which we have to pay for outside grain. Supposing the grain comes from Kashmir, naturally the transport charges, overhead and railway charges, and the various godown charges on the way, will make it incumbent on us to fix a certain price, which if adopted here for purchases by Government will involve the Government in heavy loss. Government have till now spent more than two crores of rupees for purchase of rice and paddy; that is a matter which is not as widely known as it should be. The lessons of the last war have driven home to us the possibility of exploitation of this position—the possibility of intermediate, superior or ultimate agencies trying to get sometimes legitimate, sometimes slightly illegitimate, profit in this matter. It is the object of this Government, and it is their definite programme, that we shall not make a profit out of this grain business. We do not propose to profit by the distress of the country. But as custodian of the revenues of the State, I cannot possibly consent to run this at a loss. We do not know where that loss will end and what we shall be able to do next year or the year after, if all our resources are squandered in making provision for the immediate future only. The policy of the Government, therefore, is that prices will be fixed on a panel basis or pool basis, so as not to give any considerable profit to the State, but so that the State may not incur any loss.

The actual cost price of the imported rice varies according to quality and the centre of purchase. Allotments to the State under the Government of India basic plan include supplies from the Punjab, Kashmir, Sind, Central Provinces, Baluchistan, Orissa and Eastern States and it is evident that the actual cost price of the varieties along with the respective transport charges must be a varying factor. To avoid inconveniences and hardships resulting from the fixation of varying rates of prices, Government have decided to fix, so far as is possible, pool prices on the basis of the available stock from time to time.

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The distress to which we have been reduced has been manifested and re-manifested strongly to the Government of India, by this Government and by Mr. Dixon. I am glad to be able to read this letter from the Regional Food Commissioner, dated 25th May, which reveals his comprehension of our difficulties.

> "Mr. Dixon wired to me when I was in Delhi pointing out the serious position regarding food stock in Cochin and Travancore, and enquired when the consignments may be expected. I discussed the situation with the Government of India, and have been asked to assure yourself and Mr. Dixon that the Government of India are alive to the urgency of the requirements in the two States. I was told that 10,000 tons were on the move and that they were making telegraphic enquiries about further consignments. There is some initial difficulty in getting rice moved from some of the northern provinces; but when once consignments have started moving, the position will be easier. I have written to Mr. Dixon accordingly and I am writing to you also for information."

It is comforting and more than comforting. But we shall not be cheerful unless the critical nature of the present situation has been fully comprehended and fully dealt with.

I do not propose, after having taken so much of your time, to deal at length with the position of tapioca. If and when we get a substantial portion of all the rice and millets that we require, then it may be possible to release some portion of the tapioca for industrial use, but not until then. We realise, as I said on the last occasion, that we need tapioca as a stand-by. And as between food and other industrial purposes, priority should be given to food.

I now come to the position of yarn. Next to food, clothing is of the greatest importance. Honourable members of this House must have realised that the Government of India have on hand the problem of what was called, the Standard Cloth. Standard Cloth was sent over to us for inspection and we found that the mode of wearing dhoti, the breadth of the cloth, etc., were differing widely in various parts of the country. The Standard Cloth could be likened to the bed of Procrustes. In other words, we require broader cloth unlike the people in the North. We require a cloth of slightly different texture and the problem is further complicated by this. In Travancore we have developed a very highly skilled class of craftsmen, the hand-loom weavers. Any attempt to introduce mill-made standard cloth imported from Bombay or Central Provinces or Calcutta or United Provinces into Travancore, so as to supply the needs of the whole of Travancore, would mean utter starvation of over 40,000 families of hand-loom weavers, on whom the prosperity of the State has been in the past so much dependent. We have put our view very strongly, and Mr. Kumara Das went to Delhi and returned only last evening, and he was instructed to put very strongly our case before the Government, *viz.*, that we are willing to take standard cloth to the extent of about 50 per cent. of our requirements, provided that standard cloth is offered so as to suit our requirements as to breadth and so on. If they cannot do so, and in any case, 50 per cent. at least must be given to us in the shape of yarn, so that it might be distributed to the hand-loom weavers for their production of cloth. That matter has been strongly

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urged on the Government of India. I am glad to say that I understand that our proposition does not meet with much opposition. I do not wish to put it more than that. But the position of Madras, Travancore and Cochin are more or less alike in this respect and similar demands and claims have been advanced on behalf of these units, and I trust that our claims on behalf of the hand-loom weavers will be favourably considered. And in this connection I may say it is the definite and avowed object of this Government to increase the production of yarn within the State. We have, therefore, been free to encourage, and we have encouraged the starting of mills within the State, provided they are for the production of yarn. Weaving mills, I shall not allow to be established within the State. But the production of yarn has been allowed and will be allowed.

I now come to the question of paper. The paper position may be divided into three categories; one, the needs of the school boys and the University institutions; next, the needs of the newspapers, and thirdly the needs of the Government and the Departments of Government. I shall deal with them separately.

With regard to Government and the Departments of Government, instructions have been issued that they should be very sparing in the use of adjectives and adverbs, and the efficiency of a clerk should not be judged by the number of pages which he is able to put in ink. Generally speaking, whenever I see a long note in the Secretariat file, I do not hesitate to express my views on that—whether that comes from a Secretary or clerk—I have stated to most persons that the note business should be prohibited, and that over the telephone the business may be transacted. But notwithstanding this, my success in regard to the Government Departments has not been pronounced. And I take it that very drastic steps will be necessary before people are alive to the seriousness of the situation. The paper situation is not going to improve, the paper position is going to deteriorate steadily from time to time, and next year and the year after, the paper position is going to be much worse. Paper is being used for different purposes, not only for writing purposes, but for munition, industrial purposes, and the need for paper is increasing, whereas the supply of paper is diminishing. And in these conditions the Government Departments must practise the utmost economy in the use of paper. Whatever it is, no note for executive action should be more than a dozen lines; I am perfectly willing to take for granted the capacity for argument and exposition by Heads of Departments and Secretaries, and I shall be quite content by their stating 'Yes' or 'No' in their notes. I have indicated the possibility of that in one or two of my own notes.

The second thing is with regard to school boys. There are many people who are taking advantage of the situation and preparing note books and selling them at extravagant rates. Government have resolved to take hold of all the paper and issue books to schools and colleges at basic rates, just as in the case of paddy and rice, not with the intention of making profits, but at the same time not incurring losses.

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Including the requirements of the Travancore Government, the consumption of paper within Travancore approximates, 3,000 tons and, excepting a very small quantity of white paper for the supply of which the Government of India have been approached, the bulk of the demand has to be met from the Punalur Paper Mills. Of the total output of these Mills, the quota available for private consumption within the State has been sought to be restricted in relation to all-India requirements. The question has often been asked why we have not requisitioned all the paper from the Punalur Mills. I may say that the Punalur Mills have been served with an order from the Government of India that a certain percentage of the production of the Mills must be sent to the Government of India. Thereupon correspondence has been going on between the Government of India and the Government of Travancore as regards the allocation of quota out of the total annual output of the Punalur Paper Mills and it is hoped that a satisfactory adjustment would be arrived at in this regard.

As regards Newsprint, the position is as follows: Some of the daily Newspapers were asked to supply statistics of their actual circulation. It is rather a delicate matter, no doubt, to supply statistics of circulation and it has been found rather difficult for some of these papers to comply with the request in proper manner. But it was also found that some of the Newsprint had mysteriously found its way to the black-market out of the quotas supplied to the Newspapers, the Editor or the Manager, I take it, not being aware of this malpractice. In the meantime the returns were not furnished. So, in order to relieve the suspense and the embarassment of the Managers of the Newspapers, because these bad practices on the part of the clerks were being effected without their own knowledge, I have stopped all issue of paper until the returns are forthcoming. Some of the daily Newspapers in Travancore used to apply to the Government of India for a quota and have also succeeded in obtaining certain limited supplies. It has been represented recently that they are now not in a position to secure supplies from outside the State. The result is that all the journals within the State have been pressing on the Government of Travancore for supply of newsprint. It is well-known that "newsprint" as such, or as it is commonly understood, is not manufactured in the Punalur Paper Mills. But agreeably to the wishes of the newspapers, the Government have arranged for the release to them, from time to time, of prescribed quantities of double foolscap badami paper.

The Travancore Government have, in this connection, enacted the Newsprint Control Order on lines parallel to the Order in British India with the modification that the definition of the term 'newsprint' includes also badami paper of the size now supplied to the newspapers from the Punalur Paper Mills.

Government consider it very essential that the provisions relating to the returns of stock purchased from the paper mills or acquired otherwise and the quantity actually consumed, should be strictly complied with. It is observed that newsprint of the kind supplied to

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the newspapers finds its way into the private market and Government expect that no complaints will be made if stringent measures are taken to avoid this evil.

In the very nature of things it may not be possible for Government to satisfy all the requirements of all the journals and publishers in the State and they will have to practise the utmost economy in the use of paper. In publishing news and other matter, the newspapers might well consider the relative importance of the subjects dealt with and might confine their attention to matters of genuine public interest. For instance, particular and private visits and tours of Inspectors of Schools or Assistant Commissioners of Excise and such news as these which cover a major portion of the newspapers, might well be omitted till happier times.

Special care has been taken by Government to see that all reasonable requirements of educational institutions and publishers who cater to the needs of such institutions are met. The Punalur Paper Mills have been requested to reserve a certain allotment for the purpose.

Government, in order to strengthen their position for the purpose, of being able to buy in future, the rice, the tapioca and the food grains that are necessary for the actual sustenance of the State, have necessarily to resort to very extensive and intensive industrialisation. Steps are therefore being taken by this Government to bring into existence new industries as far as and as fast as possible. Government have not flinched from embarking on these industries. Although there might be two opinions in normal times in that regard, greater employment and greater production of things by reason of which we can buy our food grains, have impelled this Government to adopt this policy. It is a pity that the vast majority of the people have not been enthusiastic about the industrialisation scheme. In this connection, I must pay a tribute to the one community in the State which alone has taken advantage of the situation. That is the Jacobite Syrian Christian community in Travancore. They are the only persons in the State who have taken advantage of the industrial position and have invested their money in industrial concerns. And they are reaping their profits; all honour to them. No other community has risen to the occasion. I must say here that unless the spirit of industrial development and advancement is widespread amongst the people, I see no hopeful future for the State.

We are now carrying on negotiations with the Madras Government for the purchase from the Papanasam Scheme, of extra power in order to extend our industrial programme, not only with regard to the Aluminium factory, and the Glass factory and the forthcoming Cement factory and the various enterprises that we have under contemplation, but for the improvement of our agricultural position also.

But having said this, I may reiterate what I said on another occasion. This is not the time for false or fictitious industrialisation, this is not the time for share-pushing, this is not the time when a rubber

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or tea estate, near which nobody has gone during the last four or five years, where no cooly can thrive on account of malaria, should be put forward as a veritable gold mine, one which will produce 25, 50 or 75 per cent, dividend. The men who start these schemes may be very capable men and their shares will be disposed of when the shares fetch the highest market value. But after the War when China will be sending out tea,—China will also have to live, and China is perhaps in even more distress than we are—and probably flooding the market with her tea, then the question will arise which of these estates are to survive. The men who will ultimately suffer most will not be the men who promote these industries now. It may be the ryot in Secunderabad, or the artisan in the Bangalore Cantonment who will ultimately bear the loss. I made these and similar observations at Alleppey, and I have received some indignant letters from some of my friends who are concerned in these floatations. Needless to say I have absolutely no personality in my mind; in fact I am proud that there are persons in Travancore who are interested in the agricultural regeneration. I find that Travancore enterprise has made its effect throughout all parts of India and they are all working in those parts. I do not differentiate between scheme and scheme; there may be right floatations and right schemes. The growth of joint-stock companies are things in which we are all interested. But there is the difference in the methods and all that I wish to say is to give a sort of warning to the share-pushers who start industries on very insufficient capital and inaugurate companies which they know cannot and will not pay; and even if they do pay, it will be transitory and fugitive profit during the period the war lasts. It is in view of all these facts that the Government have issued an Ordinance in the matter, but I may frankly say that I was not aware that these Ordinances were going to be issued so soon after I spoke at Alleppey. I received this morning a letter from Mr. Pinckney, one of the well-known planters, in which he has pointed out some of the dangers of indiscriminate floatation of companies. Let me not be understood as casting any aspersion at the industrial or other activities of any individual. My only object is to warn those people who are pursuing a purely speculative as apart from an industrial or a regenerative agricultural policy.

I had intended to speak on the subject of schools but it is far too late already and I shall content myself by saying that the whole position of education in this State is giving the utmost concern to the Government. Schools are being asked for on the ground that a particular community has no school in that locality, or that boys and girls should not walk more than two or three miles from their homes. The growth of the schools has been phenomenal but the efficiency of these schools and the growth of those things for which the schools stand, have not been as much as to cope with the growth of the schools in number. Elsewhere and on an occasion not long ago when I had to deal with this problem, I pointed out that no school is of any use to the person studying in it if the teacher there is under-paid and is forced to resort, month by month, to tricks. The starting of schools

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has been like the starting of new industries, merely for profit. It is more than a cottage industry: it is a fever; it is a delirium. Persons who do not know what to do after their failure in the Intermediate, examination immediately think of starting a school. There is the case of persons who approach the Director of Public Instruction—start a school, engage five or six teachers, who are supposed to be paid twenty rupees a month, on the basis of which grants are asked for, but who are really paid only five rupees a month, and who give recipts for rupees 20 a month. The school knows this. And the school boys know that the man who gives them religious or secular instruction, who teaches them lessons of history, of character—building, is one who has started the first day of the month with a living lie. Not merely that. How is the school-master to live on five or seven rupees? He resorts to private tuition. Private tuition means that the boy whom he teaches must pass. That means wrong marks. And all the ramifications of such a system are calculated to stop the fundamentals of character-building in the country. I would therefore suggest that the Government policy will be either that there should be a fund from which Government should be able to disburse the salaries of the teachers or there should be a scheme by which a very careful, thorough and comprehensive audit should take place and ruthless stoppage of all schools where any back-sliding takes place. For some time progress might seem to be at a stop. For some time, our figures of literacy may suffer. It may decline. But it is far better that the whole country should be rid of teachers to look at whom, schools feel a sense of humiliation. How can a teacher, who is himself half-starved, control his class? This is a matter on which I feel deeply and on which I have come to a very definite opinion. I know there are denominational institutions which will be affected by any stern policy in this direction. In fact, one of them expressed that there was a campaign against them. I may assure them that there is no campaign against one denomination or another, but it is a drive in favour of scholastic purity, in favour of character-building, a process which all denominations should equally welcome.

I have done. I have already stated that it is the intention of the Government to set up an Advisory body in regard to the food problem. Let me repeat that it is the object of this Government, whether with regard to food supplies or with regard to yarn or with regard to paper or other necessities of the complicated modern civilisation of to-day, to go side by side and hand in hand with the representatives of the people. And I trust that that co-operation, that freedom from local parochial policies with a conjoint desire to work for a common end, which is essential if we are to surmount our present difficulties, will be displayed in greater and greater measure and with an abundance so as to enable us to solve the problems which are confronting us in common with, and in some respects even more poignantly than, the rest of the world.

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